

Raccoon Pond
13.5 acres
Laurel, Delaware

Fish Community

Fish community sampling conducted by the Division of Fish and Wildlife in 2015 revealed a low density Largemouth Bass population with a high proportion of larger fish. There were noticeable gaps in the size distribution indicating variable spawning and recruitment.

Fluctuating water levels the past few years could have played a role. Although the proportion of larger fish was high, a fair number of sub-adults from 4-8" should round out the population in the coming years. Bass ≥ 15 " were not uncommon and anglers reported catching citation size (≥ 5 lbs or ≥ 20 ") bass in 2015. The average relative weight (indication of condition or 'plumpness') was very good. Another predatory fish, Chain Pickerel, were present in fair numbers although they may be more abundant than observed during sampling because this species can avoid being captured by electrofishing gear. There are adequate forage species present in the pond including Bluegill, Black Crappie and Golden Shiner. Bluegill were the most numerous species collected during sampling.



A wide range of sizes were present and the proportion of fish ≥ 6 " was within the target range for a balanced fish community. Relative weights were very good and schools of Bluegill fry were a common sight. Black Crappie were abundant with a catch rate above the countywide average. The proportion of crappie larger than 8" was indicative of a balanced fish community, although no crappie > 10 " were collected. Other species observed during sampling included American Eel, Creek Chubsucker, and Brown Bullhead.

Vegetation

Herbicides were used to control aquatic vegetation in the past when the pond was dominated by fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) and hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*). Native bladderworts (*Utricularia sp.*) that were historically present throughout the pond were absent and most of the pond is now open water. The predominant aquatic vegetation is spatterdock which grows in patches or 'beds' throughout the pond and provides habitat for the fish community. Duckweed, a small plant that floats on the surface, was also observed but was not overly abundant. Floating mats of filamentous algae occur in some years, likely due to the input of excess nutrients from stormwater run-off.

Special Conditions

Raccoon Pond is owned by the Division of Parks and Recreation and managed by staff at nearby Trap Pond State Park. Park rules and regulations (in addition to general state fishing regulations) pertain, including the need to obtain a park entrance pass. A daily fee is charged at nearby Trap Pond State Park or you can purchase an annual pass. Check online at (www.destateparks.com) for the opening and closing of the fee season and general park information or contact the Park Office at (302) 875-5153. This is a "carry in, carry out" area meaning that all trash must be taken out of the park property.

Access

Angling access is limited at this pond and there are only a few spaces along Wootten Road (County Road 72) to park. Small car-top boats and canoes/kayaks can be launched *carefully* in a small

unimproved area to the left of the dam adjacent to the end of a guard rail along Wootten Road (Rd. 72). Shoreline angling is limited to the area along the dam and a small area on the northwestern shore.



The only access for small car top boats, canoes and kayaks is at the end of the guard rail to the left of the dam on Wootten Rd (Rd. 72).



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!
Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

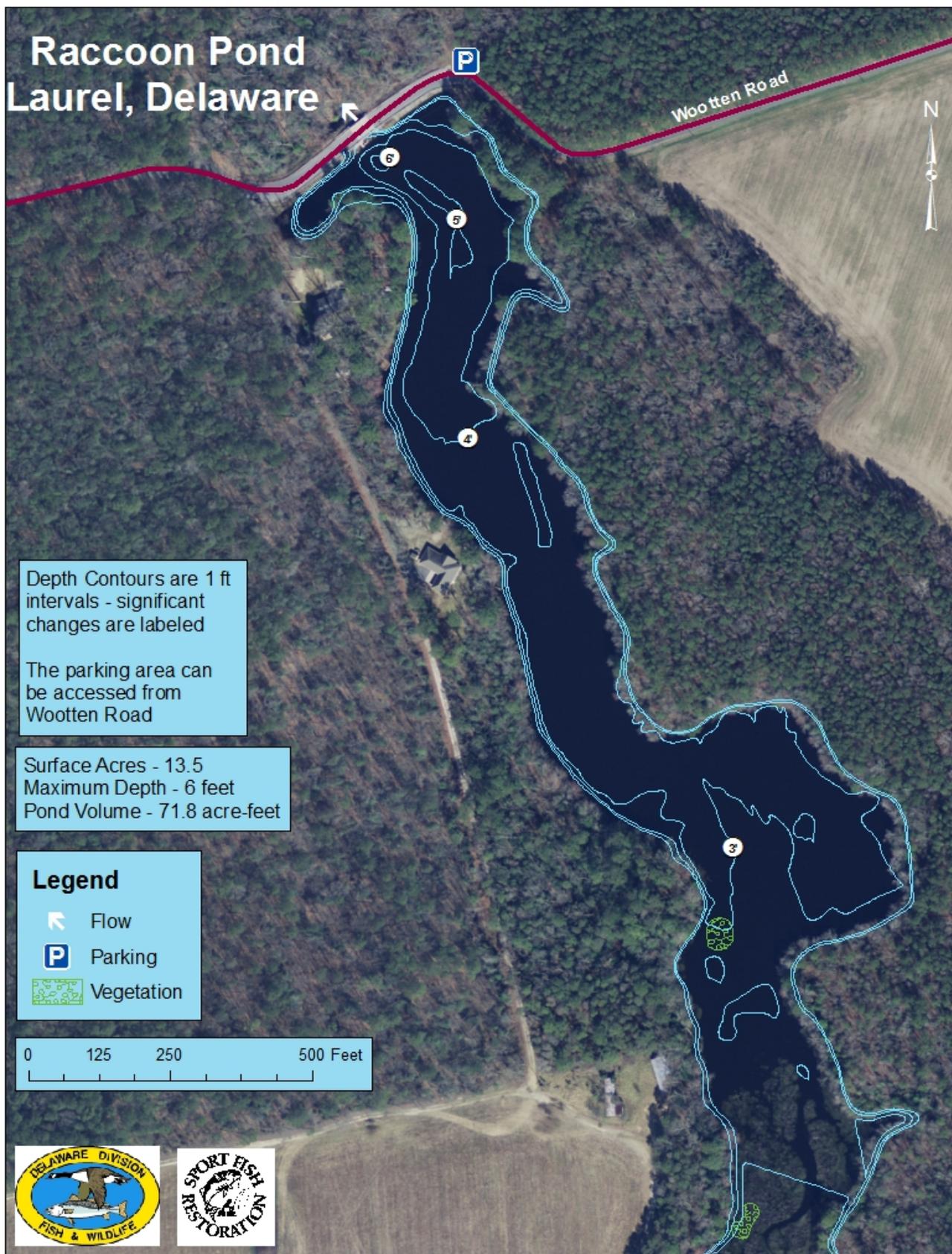
- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



Help us prevent the spread of invasives species

(see Pond Map on next page)

Raccoon Pond Laurel, Delaware



Depth Contours are 1 ft intervals - significant changes are labeled

The parking area can be accessed from Wootten Road

Surface Acres - 13.5
Maximum Depth - 6 feet
Pond Volume - 71.8 acre-feet

Legend

- ↖ Flow
- P Parking
- Vegetation

